

VZCZCXYZ0035
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHQT #0638 0742215
ZNR UUUUU ZZH CCY ADXA555D5 MSI0328
O 152215Z MAR 06
FM AMEMBASSY QUITO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3870
INFO RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA IMMEDIATE 5464
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA IMMEDIATE 0434
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ MAR 9732
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA IMMEDIATE 3573
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS IMMEDIATE 1640
RUEHZP/AMEMBASSY PANAMA IMMEDIATE 0597
RUEHGL/AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL IMMEDIATE 0118
RHMFISS/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL

UNCLAS QUITO 000638

SIPDIS
C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (PARA 3 MARKINGS)

SIPDIS
SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [MASS](#) [MOPS](#) [SNAR](#) [PTER](#) [EC](#) [CO](#)
SUBJECT: GOE "STUDIES" ALLEGED GOC AIRSPACE VIOLATION

¶1. (U) Two Colombian military aircraft reportedly entered Ecuadorian airspace in pursuit of FARC rebels in the border town of Puerto Nuevo, Sucumbios province on March 11. Representatives from the Colombian and Ecuadorian defense ministries met on March 14 on the border to exchange information on the alleged airspace violation. The Ministry of Defense has 72 hours to forward their findings to the MFA under bilateral accords; findings have not yet been released.

¶2. (U) Minister of Defense Oswaldo Jarrin on March 14 stated publicly that Ecuadorian military radar detected the March 11 airspace violation, and that the MOD would present this information to Colombian Defense Ministry representatives at their March 14 meeting on the border between the two countries. Jarrin did not classify the incident as an "incursion", but rather stated that GOC forces "violated" Ecuadorian airspace and that the incident was under investigation. He refused to speculate further, preferring to wait for the full report from the Binational Committee.

¶3. (SBU) Comment: The GOE's more measured approach to the latest alleged airspace violation suggests that post-incident consultations at the operational level are functioning. While the GOE will likely formally protest the violation, sources suggest that the GOE considers the incident minor, and will prefer to keep this incident from escalating to the political arena
JEWELL